

## CHAPTER 8

### ARMED FORCES DECORATIONS FOR FOREIGN MILITARY PERSONNEL

#### A. INTRODUCTION

1. It is the DoD policy to recognize individual acts of heroism, extraordinary achievement or meritorious achievement on the part of Service members of friendly foreign nations when such acts have been of significant benefit to the United States or materially contributed to the successful prosecution of a military campaign by Armed Forces of the United States. Such acts or achievements shall be recognized through the award of an individual U.S. decoration.

2. U.S. campaign and service medals shall not be awarded to members of foreign military establishments.

3. The provisions of this Chapter do not apply to the following:

a. Emblems, badges, or trophies awarded for the attainment of a prescribed degree of skill, proficiency, or excellence of performance.

b. The Antarctica Service Medal awarded to citizens of foreign nations.

c. Other recognition awarded in accordance with the DoD Incentive Awards Program outlined in DoD Directive 5120.15 (reference (pp)).

4. With the exception of the decorations identified in subsections B. 1. and B.3., below, the Secretary of Defense shall approve all proposals to award U.S. military decorations to foreign nationals.

#### B. DECORATIONS TO FOREIGN NATIONALS

##### 1. Decorations for Foreign Military Personnel Engaged in Direct Support of Operations

a. Foreign military personnel in ranks comparable to the grade of O-6, and below, at the time the act was performed and at the time the decoration is presented, maybe awarded:

(1) The Silver Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star, or the Air Medal for valorous acts in actual combat in direct support of operations.

(2) The Soldier's Medal, the Navy and Marine Corps Medal, or the Airman's Medal for heroic acts in direct support of operations, but not involving actual combat.

(3) The Bronze Star for meritorious service in direct support of combat operations.

b. The award of those decorations listed in subparagraphs B. 1 a.(1) through B. 1 a.(3), above, to foreign military personnel shall be based on an act or service that would satisfy the criteria governing the award of the decoration to a member of the Armed Forces of the United States.

c. Those decorations shall be awarded by the Secretary concerned or, as designated.

d. Before the awarding of any decoration listed in subsection B. 1., above, the approving authority shall coordinate with the appropriate U.S. Embassy to ensure that the decoration is consistent with the overall interests of the United States.

## 2. Legion of Merit

a. The Legion of Merit, in the following degrees, is awarded to individuals who distinguish themselves by “exceptional meritorious conduct in performance of outstanding service” to the United States according to Executive Order 9260 “Legion of Merit,” (reference (qq)):

(1) Degree of Chief Commander. Awarded by the President of the United States, upon the recommendation of the Secretary of Defense, after concurrence by the Secretary of State, to the foreign chiefs of state or the heads of government.

(2) Degree of Commander. Awarded by the Secretary of Defense, after the concurrence of the Secretary of State, to individuals holding a rank equivalent to a U.S. Military Service Chief of Staff, or higher position, but not to chiefs of state.

(3) Degree of Officer. Awarded by the Secretary of Defense, after the concurrence of the Secretary of State, to individuals of the following rank or position:

(a) Officers of general or flag rank serving in positions below the equivalent of a U.S. Military Service Chief of Staff.

(b) Officers in ranks parallel with colonel or equivalent, for service in positions comparable to those normally held by general or flag officers in the Armed Forces of the United States.

(c) Foreign military attaches.

(4) Degree of Legionnaire. Awarded by the Secretary of Defense, after the concurrence of the Secretary of State, to all others eligible under Executive Order 9260 (reference (qq)).

b. Certificates and citations to accompany recommendations for the Legion of Merit shall be prepared, as follows:

(1) Degree of Chief Commander

(a) The certificate shall be prepared for signature of the President at the lower right and signature of the Secretary of Defense at the lower left.

(b) The citation shall be prepared for signature of the Secretary of Defense and for affixing of the DoD seal.

(2) Degrees of Commander, Officer, and Legionnaire

(a) The certificate shall be prepared for signature of the Secretary of Defense at the lower right and the Head of the DoD Component or the Unified Commander initiating the recommendation at the lower **left**.

(b) The citation shall be prepared for signature of the Secretary of Defense and for affixing the DoD seal.

3. Awards of a Military Department Meritorious Service Medal, Commendation Medal, or Achievement Medal

a. The Meritorious Service Medal, Commendation Medal, or Achievement Medal of a particular Military Department may be awarded to a member of the armed forces of a friendly foreign nation who, after June 1, 1962, distinguished himself or herself by extraordinary achievement or meritorious service that has been of mutual benefit to a friendly nation and the United States, according to **E.O. 11448** (reference (x-r)) and Presidential Memorandum (reference (ss)).

b. The awarding of any of those decorations to a member of the Armed Forces of a friendly foreign nation shall be based on an act or **a service** that would satisfy the criteria governing the award of that decoration to a member of that Military Department.

c. Those decorations may be awarded by the Secretary concerned or by such officers as he or she may designate.

d. Those decorations may not be awarded to a general or flag officer of a **friendly** foreign nation without the approval of the Secretary of Defense.

C. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. THE HEADS OF THE DOD COMPONENTS AND THE UNIFIED COMBATANT COMMANDERS shall ensure that awards to foreign military personnel clearly meet the requirements of section B., above, and that those recommendations exceeding the 6-month period specified in subsection D.4., below, are disapproved, unless due to simple administrative delay or unusual circumstances. A full explanation shall be required for those cases forwarded beyond the 6-month period.

2. THE HEAD OF THE DOD COMPONENT, OR THE UNIFIED COMBATANT COMMANDER, initiating the recommendation of an award to a member of a foreign military establishment shall request the pertinent military counterintelligence organization to conduct a counterintelligence records check in conjunction with the initiation of the award recommendation.

3. THE DIRECTOR, DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY, shall review the award recommendations, and conduct counterintelligence and biographic file checks to ensure the foreign **military** nominee has committed no act or engaged in any activity wherein the award of a U.S. decoration would cause embarrassment to the United States and **shall** provide the recommending DoD Component or Unified Combatant Commander with a statement of concurrence or **nonconcurrence**.

4. THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY shall coordinate, in the OSD, the recommendations for an award requiring Secretary of Defense approval, and shall obtain a statement of concurrence from the Secretary of State, or designated representative, when required.

5. THE DIRECTOR, WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS SERVICES (WHS), shall maintain a stock of Legion of Merit certificates for all the DoD Components and the Unified Combatant Commands.

#### D. PROCEDURES

1. On receipt of the counterintelligence check, the initiating DoD Component or Unified Combatant Commander shall forward it to the DIA for review. The DIA shall prepare and return to the recommending DoD Component or Unified Combatant Command a biographic sketch together with a statement of concurrence in the proposed award and citation.

2. A recommendation from a DoD Component or an Unified Combatant Commander for an award requiring approval of the Secretary of Defense or a higher authority shall include the items in paragraphs D.2.a. through D.2.f., below. Recommendations initiated by Unified Combatant Commanders may bypass the Service and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff coordination. However, information copies should be provided.

a. Covering memorandum to the Secretary of Defense recommending approval and, where appropriate, a proposed memorandum for the Secretary of Defense to the President recommending approval.

b. Approved citation and, where appropriate, the approved certificate,

c. Biographic sketch on the individual to receive the award.

d. Statement of concurrence by the U.S. Chief of Mission and the U.S. Defense Attache (if one is assigned) to the country of the recipient of the award.

e. Statement of concurrence from the DIA.

f. Additional documentation supporting the recommendation.

3. If considered desirable, the **USD(P)** should request the Department of State to obtain the foreign country's clearance for the award.

4. Recommendation for an award should reach the **USD(P)** in six months after completion of the period of service for which the award is being recommended to ensure coordination with the DoS. On clearance by that office, the recommendation then shall be forwarded to the OSD for appropriate action.

5. After the award is approved, the recommending DoD Component or Unified Combatant Commander shall:

a. Make necessary arrangements, coordinating with the appropriate Ambassador or U.S. Defense Attache, for presenting the award. Once approved, unnecessary security or administrative processing should be avoided to ensure prompt recognition is given to the intended recipient.

b. Ensure that a miniature medal is included in the award package to be presented to the individual.

6. Scheduling of presentation ceremonies and public announcements regarding individual awards shall be avoided until approval of the award is granted.